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A
DISSWASIVE
FROM THE
S I N
O F
DRUNKENNESS.

By JOSIAH WOODWARD, D. D.
late Minister of *Poplar*.

A NEW EDITION, Corrected.

L O N D O N:

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DISWASSIVE

S I N

DRUMMER

By Joseph Woodward D.D.
the Minister of the Gospel

A Sermon on the Occasion

L O N D O N

Printed by J. Smith, in Pall Mall, near the Theatre Royal, St. James's.

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[The end of the world]

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D I S S W A S I V E

F R O M T H E

Sin of DRUNKENNESS.



THE Vice of Intemperance is such an Enemy to all that is Virtuous and Religious in Man, yea, to all that is Decent and Man-like, that every one ought to rise up with Indignation against it, as a Thing that degrades them from the Honour of Human Nature, and renders them more vile than the very Beasts.

The poor senseless Brutes may by Accident be overcome with strong Liquors,

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because

because they have no Reason to govern their Appetites, no Sense of Duty or Shame, no Foresight of Danger, nor Fear of a future Judgment: And when the Dog turns to his Vomit, or the Swine wallows in the Mire, they do but act according to their Nature. But for the noble Creature MAN, that is made after the Image of GOD, and ranked in Dignity next to the glorious Angels; Man, that has Reason to inform him in the Will of his Creator, and a Conscience to awaken his Care to comply with it; yea, for a Christian, that has the Vows of God upon him, and stands fair for an eternal Kingdom; I say, for this wise and noble Creature to part with his Reason, his Conscience, his Heaven, his God, for a little Drink more than he needs, yea, for such an Excess of it as tends to his present Pain, Disorder, and Shame, as well as to eternal Torment, is a most desperate Pitch of Sin and Folly, such as all People, when in their Senses, cannot choose but condemn; and every Body must grant, that no Kindness in the World can be more seasonable or more valuable, than that which tends to lift Men out of the Mire of this noisome Sin,

Sin, and to bring them to the decent and honourable Estate of Christian Sobriety.

And this is the Work of our blessed Religion, according to that Exhortation of the holy Scriptures, *Eph. v. 18. Be not drunk with Wine, wherein is Excess; but be filled with the Spirit.* As if it were said, Know your divine Advantages, ye that live in the State of the Gospel, and be not as Swine, which trample the richest Pearls under their Feet. Ye, who now Rave and BlaspHEME by reason of Excess of Wine, may, by a due Use of the Means of Grace, come to be filled with the holy Spirit, and to be happy in the Service and Favour of God, like the holy Angels. Wherefore consider the infinite Value of your heavenly Birthright, and do not sell it, with *Esau*, for a few sensual Draughts, lest, with him, when you come to see the Folly of it, ye weep bitterly, and perhaps eternally.

It is the Misery of fallen Man, that his Soul is sunk into the Flesh, and is prone to follow carnal Inclinations, yea, to *make Provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lusts thereof*; which is as absurd in

Nature, as for a Prince to wait on his Slave. Now, it is the Work of Reason, Religion, and the Grace of God, to amend this Disorder, by reducing the lower Faculties of the Soul into a just Obedience to the superior, and making both of them subject and obedient to the Will and Glory of God. And whereas sensual Pleasures are the usual Baits whereby Men are ensnared to Intemperance, and as it were bewitched to it, thro' the Inordinacy and Folly of their fleshly Minds, it is absolutely necessary to Salvation, that through the powerful Assistance of the holy Spirit of God in the due Observance of the Gospel Rules of Temperance, Abstinence, and Mortification, our Bodies should be kept in such Order and Regulation, that they may be fit Instruments of our Souls in our Endeavours to serve and glorify God. And herein consists the Virtue and Grace of Sobriety, namely, in prescribing just Bounds to sensual Pleasure; that we be not drawn to Excess in Eating, Drinking, or other natural Actions, thro' the Enticement of those agreeable Pleasures that attend them.

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As to the particular Case before us, that of Drinking to Excess; it hath pleased God to make many Sorts of Liquors gustful and pleasant to our Taste, that we might thereby be induced to acknowledge the Goodness of God, who gives us of his good Creatures, as well for our Delight, as for our Necessity.— But here our Sobriety must stand on its Guard, to see that we keep to the Rules of Moderation, and be not drawn to Excess by the Humour of the Company, or the Pleasantness of the Liquor.

Our bountiful Creator has provided many Sorts of Wines, and other generous Liquors, for the Entertainment of Men, to be Cordials to us under the Indispositions of our frail Bodies, and an Antidote to the over-heavy Afflictions that may befall us, *Psal. civ. 15. Prov. xxxi. 6.* In these Cases, Wine, and such like refreshing Liquors, are of excellent use to the Conveniency of human Life. And a Christian is in this Respect more kindly dealt with than a *Rechabite*, (*Jer. xxxv. 6.*) or *Mahometan*. But here's the Misery: What God has bountifully given us for good Ends, sensual Men abuse to base and pernicious Purposes. What God

gives us for Chearfulness, Men abuse to Drunkenness and Excess; and then our Cordial is turned into Poison, and our Wine into the Gall of Asps : For where Drunkenness prevails, all Virtue must needs decay, and all Vice is in a Way to thrive.

It is through the Breaches which this Crime hath made, that a great Part of that Flood of Sin, which all sober People complain of, has broken in upon us. And till this Vice ceases to be modish and common, yea, till it be duly exposed and suppressed, by the just Execution of the Laws made for that Purpose, all other Expedients for a Reformation of Manners will very much fail of their Design. And since such a Reformation would be the greatest Blessing that can come upon us, it will behove all wise and virtuous Persons to bring such Offenders to the Correction of the Magistrate, as will not otherwise be reclaimed.

This Vice does a Person so much Damage, both as a Man and as a Christian, that where there is any degree of Sense, Reason, or Conscience left, it must needs make some Impression upon him, to consider the Mischiefs which attend it.

But

But because all Motives and Endeavours to repress this, or any other Vice, will be in vain, without the Blessing and Efficacy of the Spirit of Holiness, I beseech the God of all Grace to accompany the following Considerations with his holy Spirit, that we may become mighty, thro' his Grace, to silence the Excuses, and mortify the Inclinations of Men to this Vice, and to raise in all that read them a most vehement and lasting Indignation against it. In order to which

I shall, in the *first* Place, consider the Mischiefs it does us as Men.

Secondly, The Mischiefs it does us as Christians.

I. It injures us as we are Men, by depriving us of the Use of Reason, which is the Excellency and the very Distinction of Men from Brutes. The wisest Person under the Disorder of Drink becomes a Fool, and commits a thousand Vanities and Indiscretions. The Drunkard has not the Speech, the Carriage, nor the Civility of a Man; but is wild, disorderly, and extravagant.

Man, as he is rational and wise, bears, the Image of God; but Intemperance

blots out that divine Resemblance ; and makes him more vile than the most despicable Brute. For the Brutes, tho' mean, are what God made them ; but a Person overcome with Drink, is altogether unlike to, and more contemptible than even the meanest Creature of God's making. He has turned *his Glory into the Similitude of the Ox that eateth Grass, or rather of the Swine that wallows in the Mire.* It is usually said of a Person in Drink, that *he is not himself* ; and it is true, for he does not act by the humane Principles of Reason or Conscience ; but rather by the fordid Appetites of a shameless Beast, or the raving Fury of one that's possess'd by the Devil : So that he's no longer fit for human Conversation, but is a meer Nuisance and Disturbance to all that are about him ; the Grief of some, and the Laughter of others. And the best that can be done for him is, to lay him somewhere out of the way, till Time and Sleep have recovered his lost Senses. And then surely, when his Understanding returns to him, (as to *Nebuchadnezzar*) it will be as an Arrow to his Breast, to think

think what a Beast he has been, and how many shameful Pranks he has play'd.

And it is not only for the present that this Vice disorders the Understanding, but the Custom and Habit of it many times utterly besots Men, and makes them Children in Understanding even to their Death. Where Sensuality is accustomed to domineer over Reason, it will at last establish its Authority, and the Beast will exercise Dominion over the Man: Which leads us to a *second* Consideration.

II. This Vice makes People vile and contemptible in the Sight of all Men. Even their Servants and Inferiors deride and contemn them, and the very Boys in the Streets make their Sports with them. Their ridiculous Behaviour moves the Laughter of vain People; whilst others, who consider the Matter better, cannot but mourn over the poor besotted Creature, and are ashamed that he should be thought their Friend, or their Acquaintance. And indeed what Sight can be sadder, than to see one, that is made capable of Communion with God, rendered unfit for Society with Men;
and

and to see a Man selling the Honour and Dignity of his Nature, and his Hopes of eternal Bliss, for the Pleasure of a little Liquor, whilst it is running over his Tongue. By this many Persons of Character and Distinction do make themselves vile and mean, and they lose the Respect which would otherwise be due unto them.

III. The Vice of Intemperance inflames Mens beastial Lusts and Passions, and lays their Reason asleep, which ought to guard them. And then there will be much the same Disorder, as when wild Beasts have slain their Keeper, and are got loose. For indeed the Case is much the same, where unmortified Lusts and Passions are heightened by strong Liquors, and no Reason nor Conscience is left to curb and controll them. Hence comes Impudence and Shamelessness in the most unseemly Sins; like fed Horses, they proclaim the Impurity of their Hearts, and the Fury of their Lusts, in the very Streets, as well as when they *assemble by Troops in the Houses of Harlots,* (Jer. v. 7.)

IV. It

IV. It exposes Persons to causeless Broils and Quarrels. Many People fall out in their Cups, they know not why nor how; insomuch that the wise Man would have it taken notice of as a Thing common to a Proverb, that he who sits long, till *Wine inflame him* and his Companions, is like to *have wounds without Cause*, (Prov. xxiii. 20.) When the Spirits of Men are fired by immoderate Drinking, they soon blaze out into a Passion at the least Affront, tho' but an imaginary one; and then the Blood of the Party is often shed to quench it. — How many Murthers have been committed at Taverns, Alehouses, and such like Places, within a few Years? And how great will the Cry be for Vengeance, where two such Sins as Drunkenness and Murther call at once to Heaven for Justice? How often have Men killed their nearest Relations, or dearest Friends, in their Drink, for which they have been ready to kill themselves, when they came to reflect upon it in their sober Thoughts? It was in such a Debauch as this that *Alexander* killed *Clitus*, one of the dearest and faithfulest Friends he had;

had; and that for doing one of the kindest Offices of Friendship, that is, Reproving.

NE V. In the next Place, it creates divers kinds of Diseases, and makes this present Life both short and painful. For excessive Drinking brings Surfeits, Fevers, Dropsies, Palsies, an aching Head, loss of Appetite, and what not? Some indeed, that are of a strong Constitution, may bear up longer than others under the Disorder it brings to their Bodies; but to all it is Poison, though it works more slowly upon some than others; and it fails not in the End to bring down their Heads *with Sorrow to the Grave.*

It has long been observed, and it is, alas! too manifest, that if the Sword has slain its Thousands, Intemperance has slain its Ten Thousands: And in many of those who make a shift to outlive the common Practice of it, we see such manifest Decays of their Strength, Vigour, Wit, and Sense, that God seems to suffer them to live as Examples to affright others from such ill Courses. May God in his Mercy teach all that are concerned to take Warning thereby!

VI. A Person in the Disorder of Drink is unable to shun the most apparent Danger. His Eyes are blinded, that he cannot discern the Danger of a Pit or Precipice that lies before him, nor know his Friend from his Enemy. How many have fallen from their Horses, or tumbled into Pits, or fallen into Ponds, or been burnt in their Beds, in a fit of Intemperance? Yea, their own Weakness seems to threaten their Life; they reel and stagger like an Infant; they stumble at every Stone that lies in their Way, and are ready to fall to their Ruin. And if by these, or any such Accidents, they come by their Death, in what a woful Condition must they appear before God, having died in the very Act of abusing His Mercies, and transgressing His Will?

VII. It begets in them a Contempt of Sobriety and sober Persons. The Psalmist complains that he was the *Song of the Drunkards*, (Psal. lxxix. 12.) When Nabal was in his Wine, he railed against David the Anointed of God, as if he were a Run-away from his Master, (1 Sam. xxv. 10.)

I might add, that it causes People to be imposed upon in their Dealings, and renders them a Prey to every designing Cheat. It makes them unfit for any Trust, and for any publick Office in Council or War. It also blasts their Reputation and Esteem in the World; for there's scarce any Name more infamous than that of a Sot, or a common Drunkard.

And after all, 'tis a very wasteful Vice; it is never maintained but by unnecessary Expence, great Waste of Time, and Neglect of Business. How many starve the Backs and Bellies of their Families, to maintain this expensive Vice? Inform much that *Solomon* makes it a Proverb, that the *Drunkard and the Glutton shall come to Poverty*, (Prov. xxiii. 21.)

Thus we see some of the Mischiefs of this Vice to us as Men: But alas! The one Half of its Damages is not yet cast up; for if we look on this Sin, with the enlightened Eyes of a Christian, we shall see far greater Mischiefs done by it. For,

1. It drives away the Holy Spirit of God. This is taught us by the Apostle

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in the Scripture before mentioned, *Eph. v. 18. Be not drunk with Wine, wherein is Excess; but be filled with the Spirit.* Where the disjunctive Particle [*but*] shews us, that we cannot enjoy both together. Our Excess will drive away our Sanctifier and Comforter. He is too delicate to dwell with the nasty spewing Drunkard. *For what Communion hath Light with Darknes; or Christ with Belial?* 2 Cor. vi. 15. Surely, if any deserve the Name of Sons of *Belial*, (that is, Men without Yoke, Restraint, or Government) these are the Persons, for they are the most rude and ungovernable of all others. And besides,

2. This Vice unfits us for every spiritual and religious Action. The poor besotted Wretch cannot so much as think one sober Thought, or receive any Good by the pious Advice of others. What Order can there be in that Family, where the Master of it is Drunk? Is such a one fit to pray with his Family, or to instruct them in the Duties of Religion! May he not tremble to touch any holy Thing in such a polluted Condition? Has he not reason to dread the Vengeance

ance of a Holy God upon such a disorderly Approach to Him? *Nadab and Abihu*, the Priests, the Sons of *Aaron*, are supposed to have drank too much when they offered *strange Fire* before the Lord; because it is immediately added, *Lev. x. 9, 10.* That neither *Aaron*, nor his Sons, should drink any Wine nor strong Drink, when they went into the *Tabernacle*, lest they die for it. It was always held as an Abomination to carry Swine's Flesh into the Temple; which seems to teach us, that all Persons of impure and ungoverned Appetites, are utterly unfit for Communion with the holy God.

3. This Vice does very sadly waste the Conscience. It is of a dulling, besotting Nature: It drowns all serious Thought and Reflection, where it grows to a Habit: How many have been hereby seduced into all Exorbitancies and Debauchery? It generally betrays Men to profane Swearing, Lying, Passions, filthy Language and Actions, and to any Ill. He is (as *Solomon* says) like one that lieth on the Top of a Mast, in which Case he cannot stir, without endangering his Life, *Prov. xxiii. 34.* so a Person that is drunk, will

will be like to do every thing amiss that he sets himself to, and to be overcome by every Temptation that lies in his Way.

4. Intemperance pulls down dreadful Wrath upon the Person that is guilty of it, in this Life, and that to come. The Book of God is so full of Woes against it, that they appear like a Multitude of Spears set in array against the Person that treads in this forbidden Path. *Wo to the Crown of Pride, the Drunkards of Ephraim, Isa. xxviii. 1. Wo unto them that rise up early in the Morning that they may follow strong Drink, that continue until Night, till Wine inflame them, Isa. v. 11. Wo unto him that giveth his Neighbour Drink, that puttest thy Bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayst see his Nakedness. Thou art filled with Shame for Glory; the Cup of the Lord's right Hand shall be turned unto thee, and shameful Spewing shall be on thy Glory, Hab. ii. 15. No Drunkard shall inherit the Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. vi. 10.* Surely, where there is not perfect Infidelity, these Terrors of the Lord will in some measure over-awe Men. For it is very dismal to consider, thro' what crooked and uneasy

uneasy Paths they pass on to the Place of everlasting Torment ; where their Mouths will probably be parched with greater Heat than others, in proportion to their former Excesses, and they will for ever want a Drop of cold Water to cool their Tongues. And then, it will be but little Comfort to think of the Bottles and Barrels that they have drank in waste in their former Life ; yea, that very Thought will for ever give Fuel to their Flames.

Let those that are strong to drink Wine, or strong Drink, consider this ; and such as entice or compel others to drink more than is fit. It is so natural to leave every one to his Liberty in this Point, that a Heathen Emperor provided for it by the Law, *Estb. i. 8. The Drinking* (at a most generous Entertainment) *was according to the Law, none did compel.*

These Things being considered, we even beseech Men, by all that is dear to them in both Worlds, to disdain a base Vice, which adds so much to their present Reproach and Damage, and to their eternal Torment and Confusion.

We perswade you by the Love ye bear yourselves, *my Brethren*, as ye desire the Continuance

Continuance of your present Life and Health ; as you regard the Honour of Human Nature, or tender your Reputation, that you abhor a Vice, which destroys all these Enjoyments.

Yea, we entreat you by that which ought to be dearer to you than your Lives, even by the Love and Fear of the great and good God, as you value his Favour, and would not fall under his everlasting Vengeance, that you would instantly discard this destructive Vice, and that you would *watch* and *be sober*.

Come out of the senseless Amusements of this besotting Sin, *my Brother*; shun the Company, the Drink, and the Occasion which leads you into this Snare, and thereby into the Bottomless Pit. Look up to Heaven, I beseech you, before it be utterly lost ; frequent the Company of good and sober People, and entreat them to watch over you, and to admonish you in the Lord ; and above all, beg the gracious Conduct of God's Holy Spirit, by earnest and continual Prayer ; and be sure to frequent all God's holy Ordinances, and to improve all good Motions put into your Heart from above. And think often upon the Mischiefs

chiefs of this Sin in both Worlds, with an awakened Expectation of a Judgment to come.

But if our most affectionate Persuasives take no Place upon you, we must then, in pure Affection to you, try the Power of other Restraints; as we deal with our best Friends, when they are bereaved of the Use of their Reason. And we cannot but entreat all sober Persons, as they would do you Good, or do Honour to God, that they would put you to Shame before the Magistrate, to restrain you from destroying yourself, and pulling down Calamities and Judgments upon the Publick. If you saw a Person in a furious or drunken Fit, casting Firebrands upon all the Houses he came near, you would think all those People worthy of great Blame that did not lay hold on him, and bring him to Justice. And in very Truth, every scandalous Transgressor does greater Mischief to his Neighbour; for by Reason of these Things, where they abound without Controul, the righteous Judgments of God come upon a Land, till it be made a Reproach and a Desolation.

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Upon the Whole : If no Entreaty nor Affliction upon Earth will reclaim the excessive Lover of his Drink, a very short Time will convince him of the Unreasonableness and sad Consequence of so doing; even when he shall receive a Summons by some Disease, or some sudden Accident, (perhaps of his own procuring) to appear before his great and terrible Judge : Then will a Cup of Trembling be put into his Hands, as in the Case of *Belshazzar*, and he must drink of the Cup of God's Wrath for ever. Then will the most besotted Wretch begin to think soberly both of Vice and Virtue; and cry out of the Folly of pleasing himself in that sottish Way of Life, which first robbed him of his Reason, then of his Conscience, then of his God, and then of his Heaven.

The prudent Man foreseeth the Evil, and hideth himself; but the Simple pass on and are punished, Prov. xxii. 3.

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